



United States Mint Unveils Designs for 2003 National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Medal Series

March 14, 2003

SEBASTIAN, FLORIDA — United States Mint Director Henrietta Holsman Fore today unveiled the designs for the 2003 National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Medal Series. Florida Governor Jeb Bush, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and Assistant Interior Secretary Craig Manson, among others, joined Director Fore.

The series features four commemorative silver medals and one commemorative bronze medal in honor of the 100th anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The initial silver and bronze medals are tentatively scheduled for release in early summer 2003. The remaining three silver medals will be released throughout 2003.

"These designs celebrate the priceless natural treasures of our nation, and the legacy of a pioneering, visionary President who a century ago recognized the value of conserving this Nation's precious resources," said Director Fore.

The series will feature a common obverse (heads) honoring President Theodore Roosevelt, the Refuge System's founder. The obverse depicts a full-body image of the 26th president standing on high ground with the inscription "CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF CONSERVATION 1903–2003 THEODORE ROOSEVELT." Circling the edge of the upper rim is the inscription "NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM."

Each of the four silver medals will feature a different reverse (tails) design, depicting a bald eagle, elk, salmon, and canvasback duck, representing the diversity of wildlife that the System protects. A bronze duplicate of the bald eagle reverse design medal also will be available.

The first reverse design for the medals, available in both silver and bronze, depicts a bald eagle with upswept wings in a dramatic upward flight. Treetops are in the background. The inscription "BALD EAGLE" circles the upper edge. The elk reverse design portrays an elk in full side view, with large antlers, standing on grassy ground. The upper edge carries the "ELK" inscription. The third reverse design depicts a leaping salmon in full side view in the foreground, and a second smaller salmon leaping in the background; both are against a river and rocks background. The upper edge of the medal's rim carries the inscription "SALMON." The final reverse design depicts two canvasback ducks in flight, one with wings fully spread, the other with upswept wings, both against a wetlands background. The inscription "CANVASBACK DUCK" circles the edge of the upper rim.

The silver medals will be 1.5 inches in diameter with a smooth edge, struck in proof condition, encapsulated in plastic and packaged in a blue presentation box. The bronze medal, with the same diameter and edge as the silver medals, will be packaged in Mylar.

The silver medal series will have limited production. A sales commission based on a percentage of the proceeds is authorized to benefit the National Wildlife Refuge System and its conservation efforts. The medals will be struck in Philadelphia, but will not bear a mint mark.

Collectors interested in purchasing these medals or acquiring additional information are encouraged to visit the United States Mint's website at www.usmint.gov or to call the United States Mint Customer Care Center at 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468).

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